

March 10, 2016

The March 10, 2016 meeting of the Mansfield Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Ruth Pante, held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1976, followed by a pledge of allegiance to the flag. Present were Ruth Pante, Glenn Todd, Dawn Smith, Robert Jewel, Elaine Drazek, James McMekin; Allison Lorentson was excused; also in attendance were Township Committeemen Joseph Watters and Michael Misertino. In the audience were Heather Hamilton and Ruth Burns, art teacher at Mansfield School.

Minutes

In the February 11, 2016 minutes, the third enumerated paragraph is listed as "ANJEC Grant Application" which should be corrected to "Sustainable Jersey Grant Application". With that correction, it was MOVED by Ms. Drazek to accept and approve the minutes of the February meeting, seconded by Ms. Smith. All in favor.

ANJEC Grant Submission

Ms. Smith reported submission of a series of photographs for future use (ERI, etc.). The deadline for the grant application is April 1. It will take about 13 months to fully execute the requirements of the grant; this is not a matching funds grant. Ms. Smith suggests a format to show photos and set up for selection by residents (historic, animals, wildlife, etc.); legal questions must be answered. Matthew Wielgus will present this to the Open Space Committee and will present to the Township Committee for approval.

Cafferata Park

More trees are forthcoming and will be planted; Ms. Smith is in contact with Tim Terry. Seven bluebird nesting boxes are in place, a donation of one more is expected from Mr. Todd. Ms. Smith suggested a press release to advertise efforts at the park. Also, Mr. Jewel has donated a truck load of mulch which volunteers will spread on March 12 at 8:30 a.m.

Ms. Smith has found a company offering four of the five botanical signs needed for identification at \$4.95 each; she is still searching for Sweet Birch signs. Kevin Ward will arrange for posts for the signs and will also arrange for watering.

Earth Day

Ms. Drazek introduced Ruth Burns, art teacher at Mansfield School, who will do an Earth Day project with her students emphasizing recycling. The 4th and 6th graders are doing art work with recyclable trash, sculptural objects; bottle caps and other items are being collected. Ms. Drazek asked for help from the Environmental Commission. A display will be set up in April, and Commission members could help with judging.

Environmental Comments

Submission is sought for Environmental Commission news items to include in the annual tax newsletter. ANJEC Grant and Sustainable Jersey Grants as well as a community garden were discussed; to be decided in April.

NJ Tree Recovery Campaign has again offered seedlings for Mansfield residents, available April 22 at the Municipal Building. Ms. Smith will bring recommendations to the April Commission meeting.

At the Rt. 57 development currently in progress, Mr. Todd commented the contractor is moving further and further back into the trout brook in the woods; a pipe is going in that direction. Finelli Engineering is overseeing the project. This is a swampy area, and many turtles inhabit the area. Mr. Jewel suggested contacting the Soil Conservation Service to look into the construction in a known wetlands area. Mr. Watters checks with the SCS office weekly and he will reopen the Environmental Commission comments from the initial application.

Mr. McMekin read an editorial on a solar farm planned for the Great Adventure park in Jackson, NJ. Removal of 70 acres of trees is anticipated, a chipper will be used to cut the trees down. Commission members agreed a carport should be erected instead.

Ms. Smith reported the Musconetcong Watershed Association will be conducting its river cleanup on Saturday, April 16. This will be coordinated with Scouts; 15 bags of trash were collected last year.

Money ran out for e-waste recycling in Warren County; NuTech previously did this at no charge in Warren County. Older TVs and monitors are difficult to recycle; there is only one company in the US that still does this. There was much discussion, and members agreed there is a need to put responsibility on the manufacturers because of the many issues with recycling.

Mr. Misertino, liaison representative from the Recreation Committee, said that Committee is looking at Mansfield's recreation assets; there is no money available for repairs at current facilities. Mr. Misertino is helping with collaboration of forming plans for the park. He has spoken with the township engineer to discuss what needs to happen. Soccer is the highest utilization in Mansfield. A simple design would consist of 8 fields. A formal garden as well as community garden would be possible. Wastewater management must be in place to deal with stormwater. More parking is needed. Biggest cost is expected to be the excavating. Trail grant is \$24,000. Farmer has a lease agreement for this year, vision is needed for next year. Deeper vision plans are needed.

At 9:10 p.m. the meeting was turned over to the Green Team.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth A. Pante

Next meeting date:
April 14, 2016